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ABSTRACT

This paper examines early childhood development, family, health, and literacy. It places particular emphasis on the need to consider the interrelationships of these factors when attempting to use literacy to improve the quality of life of individuals in developing countries. The paper begins with a discussion of learning capacity and a conceptual model of the interrelationships between the factors. It then moves to an overview of the main issues involved in early childhood development and literacy, considering industrialized and developing country approaches to the issues of school readiness, school quality, and early childhood development programs. The next section comprises a discussion of women and literacy in general, including the state of the women's literacy movement and suggestions for future development. Next is a discussion of family issues and literacy that examines the U.S. family literacy movement, family approaches to literacy in developing countries, and how family approaches may affect women. The following section is a treatment of the issue of literacy and health. The paper concludes with a discussion of the need to combine literacy programs and social life. Appendixes contain a 41-item annotated bibliography and 59 references. (YLB)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD, FAMILY, AND HEALTH ISSUES IN LITERACY:

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Laurel D. Puchner
National Center on Adult Literacy
University of Pennsylvania

LRC/NCAL INTERNATIONAL PAPER IP93-2
JUNE 1993

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EARLY CHILDHOOD, FAMILY, AND HEALTH ISSUES IN LITERACY:

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This paper examines early childhood development, family, health, and literacy, placing particular emphasis on the need to consider the interrelationships between these factors when attempting to use literacy to improve the quality of life of individuals in developing countries. The paper provides a conceptual model of the interrelationships between the factors, and then individually discusses the topics of early childhood development and literacy, women and literacy, family issues in literacy, and health and literacy. The author argues that literacy programs need to be integrated with the social lives of individuals in order to bring about changes in human development, and provides examples of ways in which such integration may be done. The paper includes an annotated bibliography of major books and articles on topics pertaining to the discussion.

INTRODUCTION

Based on recent research, the following statements appear to be true: (a) parental literacy is a major predictor of children's school achievement and children's health (Wagner & Spratt, 1988; Cochrane, 1980); (b) infant nutritional supplementation may increase likelihood of school enrollment of a child (Myers, 1992; Klein, 1979); and (c) preschool programs with parental involvement appear to be more successful generally than those without (Myers, 1992). Early childhood, family, and health issues in literacy have often been discussed as separate topics. While it is convenient to isolate the factors under certain circumstances, as is clear in the above statements, and as will become increasingly clear throughout this paper, the interrelatedness of these concepts is of utmost importance in improving literacy levels in developing countries.

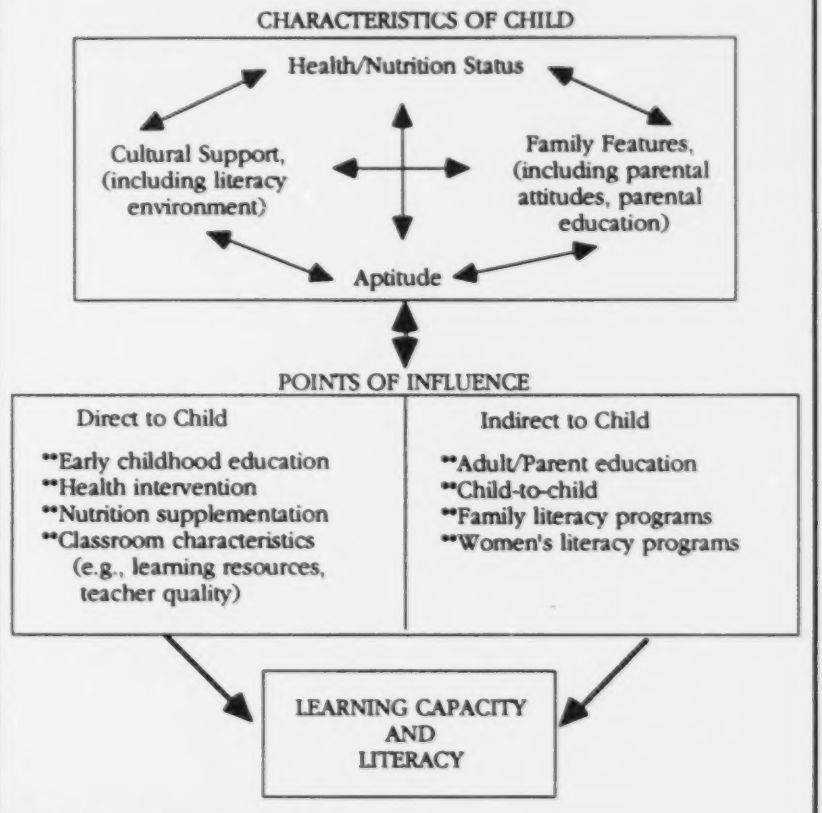
This paper begins with a discussion of a learning capacity and literacy model. It then moves to an overview of the main issues involved in early childhood development and literacy, considering industrialized and developing country approaches to the issues of school readiness, school quality, and early childhood development programs. The next section comprises a discussion of women and literacy in general, including the state of the women's literacy movement and suggestions for future development. Next is a discussion of family issues and literacy, examining the American family literacy movement, family approaches to literacy in developing countries, and how family approaches may affect women. Following is a treatment of the issue of literacy and health. The paper concludes with a discussion of the need to combine literacy programs and social life.

A. Learning Capacity and Literacy Model

Figure 1 provides a conceptual model of the interrelationships between early childhood characteristics, family, health, and literacy, as well as the various ways in which interventions may interact with these features. Two sets of features, characteristics of the child and points of influence, interact to form the learning capacity and literacy of a child.

FIGURE 1

FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING CAPACITY AND LITERACY IN CHILDREN*



*Adapted from Levinger, 1992, p. 28

The characteristics of the child include such factors as the health/nutrition status of the child, the family features, including parental attitudes and parental education, the aptitude of the child, and the cultural support the child receives, each of which interacts with all of the others. Parental attitudes, for example, influence the child's health through parental responses to health problems of the child. The health of the child in turn affects parental attitudes toward the child as it influences parental perceptions of the child's ability to perform social and cognitive functions.

The points of influence comprise various forms of intervention which may interact with the characteristics of the child to influence the learning capacity and literacy outcome. Examples of such points of influence include early childhood education programs, health and nutrition programs, and the quality of the classroom context, each of which may directly affect the child. Others act more indirectly to affect the child, such as parent education, child-to-child programs, family literacy programs and women's literacy programs. The points of influence impact the child characteristics, and vice versa. Together the two sets of features impact the learning capacity and literacy of the child. The intention of the model is to provide a framework for the discussion provided in this paper which will consider in more detail how the connections within this model are manifested, as well as the policy implications of these manifestations.

B. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LITERACY

While much research on literacy acquisition in children has occurred in industrialized countries, relatively little has occurred in the Third World. Much of the research on the relationship between early childhood development and literacy in the U.S. has focused on emergent literacy, as researchers work to identify experiences with print which facilitate the development of literacy skills later on, such as book handling skills, recognition of words in their environmental context, grapho-phonetic skills (such as where words begin and end) and other metalinguistic skills (such as context-dependency, and the processes of reading) (Clay, 1972; Downing, 1970; Goodman, 1983; Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1982; Smith, 1976; Hiebert, 1986; Mathias & Quisenberry, 1986). Emergent literacy features are not restricted to skills directly tied to literacy, but include early language and other socio-cognitive skills which may influence literacy learning later. Based on the assumption that literacy development begins long before formal instruction, development of emergent literacy skills is seen to depend highly on pre-school home experience.

In developing countries, children's first exposure to print often comes in school. Some American studies of emergent literacy thus are of limited relevance in most Third World situations, except insofar as they underline the importance of the creation of a "literate" environment in Third World communities through increased access to primary school, adult education, and meaningful printed materials. However, they also point to the urgent need for research on emergent literacy in Third World contexts, as the identification of vital early language and other skills which are precursors to literacy but not directly print-related may be particularly important in cultures characterized by a lack of early print exposure. Such knowledge could be utilized in the creation of effective early childhood programs, for example.

Despite the lack of research on early literacy in the Third World, much can be said about early childhood factors and later literacy achievement. In any society, the link between child development and literacy is not limited to specific cognitive dimensions which have been found to correlate with literacy. Even in the absence of pre-reading skills directly related to print, the available evidence suggests that literacy learning in school is

linked to many social, cognitive, and physical dimensions of children's development (Levinger, 1992; Myers, 1992). Health, nutritional state, parental knowledge and individual expectations also influence school-based learning (Wagner & Spratt, 1988; Myers, 1992). It has now been determined that the environment plays a crucial role in the early years as brain cells are formed, and sensory environmental stimulation affects the structure and organization of neural pathways (Cole & Cole, 1989; Myers, 1992).

In developing countries, where the large majority of children do not grow up with the rich literacy environment characteristic of industrialized nations, it is particularly useful to consider the concept of school readiness, a term which includes activity level, social competencies, psychological preparedness, emergent literacy skills, pre-numeracy and other cognitive abilities. Those children who have been well-nourished, kept in good health, cognitively stimulated, and have had good relationships with others, will be better prepared to learn literacy in school (Myers, 1992).

One way to enhance the early childhood environment of children is through early childhood programs, and evidence from studies of such programs in industrialized and developing countries support the belief that early childhood intervention can succeed in increasing children's school achievement. In the U.S., evidence has come from the evaluation of several programs showing that quality early childhood programs can lead to improved intellectual performance, improved scholastic achievement, lower delinquency rate during adolescence, higher high school graduation rates, and higher employment rates at age 19 (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1985). Probably the most comprehensive of the American studies is the Perry Preschool Project which began in 1962 in Ypsilanti, Michigan. In this project, disadvantaged minority children who were assigned to receive high quality preschool education were compared to children receiving no preschool education. Results of the long-term study have shown that experimental children have better achievement throughout school than controls, reduced delinquency and arrest rate, reduced teenage pregnancy rate, and decreased dependency on welfare (Weikart, 1989).

One cannot generalize from results taken from industrialized countries to developing countries, but there has been evidence as well from the Third World that participation in early childhood development programs was associated with positive academic and social outcomes. Evaluations of nutrition supplementation and early childhood programs in developing countries have shown

that programs involving one or more of such components as supplemental nutrition intake, home visits, preschool, and/or health care, can lead to higher likelihood of school enrollment (perhaps from parents' perceptions of intellectual ability of children), improved cognitive ability, better school achievement, better school readiness, better language ability, better physical growth, and improved home stimulation (Myers, 1992).

Early childhood programs can take many forms, and in his discussion of early childhood programs in developing countries, Myers (1992) emphasizes the importance of looking beyond centers and pre-schools to such non-institutional approaches as providing support and education to caregivers, promoting community development, and strengthening institutional resources and capacities (p. 87). There is also much evidence to support uses of integrated approaches to child development, so that programs include attention to health, nutrition, cognitive development, and psychosocial development. Social factors heavily influence food intake for example, and stress may reduce food intake. In one study carried out in a nutrition center, malnourished children who were played with for one hour per day in addition to receiving food supplements gained weight better and faster than controls receiving only food supplements (Grantham-McGregor, 1984, as cited in Myers, 1992). Researchers have also studied children who managed to grow up well-nourished in malnourished environments, finding that quality caregiver-child interactions and an effective network of social support for the caregiver can lead to a significant difference in the amount of food a child receives (Myers, 1992, p. 177).

In addition to school readiness, quality of the primary school context is also crucial to literacy. Even if children are ready to learn, there may be a certain minimum level of school quality necessary for certain school readiness variables to have any positive effect. For example, in some Third World classrooms, high activity level and curiosity, may be less adaptive than the ability to sit still for long periods of time. Factors leading to success may differ according to gender as well.

In many Third World countries, children's principal exposure to literacy is in school, making the quality of school literacy instruction particularly important. For these children, motivation for literacy may come uniquely from the desire to get through school, as it is not facilitated by experiences in reading and writing outside of school (Mathias & Quisenberry, 1986).

One researcher argues that in Latin American cities, children of literate parents come to school with a knowledge of the usefulness

of print in everyday life, while poorer children from families of non-literate parents do not (Ferreiro, 1992). Because school literacy is applied uniquely for the purpose of teaching or learning to read, the disadvantaged children never see uses of literacy outside of school and after one year have learned that the purpose of literacy is to get to the next grade. Ferreiro has suggested the need to make the social functions of literacy more explicit at school, by providing reading materials more relevant to everyday contexts.

C. WOMEN AND LITERACY

Literacy acquisition in women has been linked with various social, economic, and personal benefits, including greater likelihood of using health care aids properly, greater disposition to space children, greater readiness to participate in new forms of economic organization, and release from fears of humiliation and powerlessness (Bown, 1990; Stromquist, 1991). Several major volumes have recently appeared on the topic (e.g., Ballara, 1992; Malmquist, 1992), and efforts to promote the education of girls and women have been launched by USAID and other organizations.

The relationship between women's literacy and development variables has been repeatedly documented, but much of the evidence is anecdotal, and many of the correlational (statistical) effects may come from schooling or other associated variables, (e.g., SES), rather than from literacy, *per se*. As some specialists have said (e.g., Street, 1992), raising literacy levels of women may help lead to greater functioning skills, but quality of life is unlikely to be enhanced if the skills are not accompanied by certain other basics. There is remarkably little empirical evidence that literacy attainment among women (in particular), in the absence of certain other variables, has a positive socio-economic effect on their lives.

Literacy programs aimed at women have been criticized on various grounds, such as program content that reinforces current notions of inequality, pushing for broad feminist goals when women themselves are struggling to survive, and failure to take into account constraints caused by women's time-consuming domestic roles (Stromquist, 1992). Women in marginalized populations in the U.S., like rural women in developing countries, are also often cut off from productive sectors of society, and may not see the potential benefits of the literacy programs that are offered.

The term *empowerment* of women is often used as the goal of such programs. However, it is not clear what form such empowerment should take, nor how a program based on empowerment might work effectively. One new approach, derived from Moser (1989), has begun to be applied nationally and internationally, and distinguishes between *practical* gender needs (women's immediate concrete needs which pertain to subordination) and *strategic* gender needs, (broader interests arising from the overall organization of men and women's roles in society). Literacy programs which address a combination of practical and strategic needs may better ensure that women's

immediate context-specific needs will be met, such as the need to read a housing contract, or a bus schedule, and that changes will occur within the sociopolitical domain as well, such as adoption of measures against male violence.

Much of the current literature on women and literacy focuses on proclaiming the need for women's literacy, and describing the supposed benefits. This type of information has been helpful for raising awareness of the issue, and it still carries importance. However, there needs to be wider recognition that the question is no longer whether or not to educate women towards higher literacy levels, but what types of skills will bring about the desired policy, social and individual outcomes, and what types of programs will bring about these desired skills in various contexts (Wagner, 1992).

D. Family Issues in Literacy

There has been increasing interest among American educators in the connection between families and literacy (Gadsden, 1992). Likewise, interest in family approaches to development has recently increased on the part of international development agencies and individuals. Reasons for this interest come from evidence indicating that early childhood and school programs may be more successful when other family members are involved (Myers, 1992), and the finding in the U.S. and in developing countries that parental education is one of the best predictors of a child's school success (Wider Opportunities for Women, 1991; Wagner & Spratt, 1988).

Family approaches to literacy characterize those programs aimed at improving the literacy skills of an individual as part of the family context into three categories which are not mutually exclusive. First there are approaches which focus on the family as the unit of both the intervention and the outcome goals. A program in which both parents and their children receive literacy instruction, with an emphasis on parent-child interaction, would be an example of this first type of approach.

Second, there are approaches whose intervention occurs with one individual within a family, such as mothers, but with the hope that the individual will carry benefits to other family members. Many American family literacy programs teach reading and writing skills to the parent only, while giving them tips on how to encourage their children to read. Child-to-child programs, which have been initiated in developing countries, are more common worldwide.

Third, there are approaches which aim to improve skills of one particular member, in the context of that person's family in order to provide the most benefit to the individual. Some Third World development agencies which focus on young children use this last approach (e.g., Van Leer Foundation, Save the Children).

In the 1980s the growing concern in the U.S. about adult illiteracy, global competitiveness, school success for children and teenagers, and the social disintegration of the family gave rise to the *family literacy* movement. Low literate parents, it is surmised, are not able to provide the literacy experience to their children that literate parents do. Targeting educationally disadvantaged parents and children, family literacy programs consider parents

and their children as a learning unit, assuming that they may profit from literacy as a shared experience (Nickse, 1989).

Nickse (1990) has identified four basic models for delivering family literacy services, starting with a direct adult-direct child model involving integrated programming and intense instruction and participation of a parent and the preschool child. The second model, which she calls an indirect adult-indirect child model, is characteristic of many library programs, and involves participation of a child and an adult in a program whose goal is promoting reading for enjoyment. These programs are less intense than the first model, and involve no direct instruction.

Nickse's third model is the direct adult-indirect child model, where adults who are parents are instructed in literacy and perhaps in reading to children, with the hope that the parents' improved skills and interest in reading will have an influence on their children. Last, Nickse describes the direct child-indirect adult model in which the child receives all of the instruction with parent participation but no instruction of parents. Many preschools and kindergarten programs which include parent participation fall under this model of intervention.

An important issue in family literacy programs in America is that they tend to teach parents and children skills which are characteristic of ***mainstream*** families, such as book reading and ***appropriate*** verbal reaction to children (Nickse, 1988, 1990; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Handel & Goldsmith, 1989). According to Auerbach (1989), such techniques may not work in some cases because such activities sometimes do not reflect the cultural roots of client populations.

Although family literacy in its American form has not traveled to the developing world, programs which involve both families and literacy activities are very common. Organizations focusing on children, such as the Bernard van Leer Foundation and Save the Children, have believed since their beginnings that the lives of children cannot be significantly changed in isolation from their families; hence their interventions generally involve family and community members. In addition, a UNESCO (1991a) survey of early childhood education programs showed that many included parent involvement. Although the most common forms of participation included serving on parent committees, raising funds, and building centers, other forms ranged from parent programs in Mexican preschools aimed at helping parents provide a stimulating environment in the home, to a Fiji program

in which parents observe their children at various preschool activities.

In addition to the activities with older roots, there appears to be a recent resurgence in interest in family involvement in the development of young children, as evidenced by several initiatives launched by major organizations. A first example comes from the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (CGECCD) which focuses on early childhood education, with an emphasis on parent and community support. Also, in 1989, UNESCO launched the Young Child and the Family Environment Project. The chief function of the project is to co-ordinate UNESCO activities in favor of the family and preschool child, with the objective of promoting the development of preschool children, especially as it relates to "learning abilities and integration into the education process" (Myers, 1991). The four areas of emphasis in this initiative are nutrition and early childhood stimulation, child-rearing practices, childhood disabilities, and preschool education. Activities associated with the project have included the development of training activities for parents with children vulnerable to developmental handicaps and the formation of a database directory of institutions whose activities promote an improvement in the situation of children. Although these activities do not closely resemble the initiatives described previously for the U.S., there exist several future possibilities which are more similar to the American programs, including: family education initiatives; research initiatives to identify traditional child-rearing practices which are culturally valued and scientifically beneficial; and activities integrating parental education into preschool programs (Myers, 1991).

A final testament to the rise in interest in family approaches to development more generally comes from the family and development initiative of USAID. Recognizing the importance of looking at how intra-family relationships and gender roles influence the allocation of resources in a family, as well as decision-making, the goal of the initiative is to use the family "as the starting point for analysis...and as an organizing principle for mobilizing the energy of people to create progress." (USAID, 1990). USAID has held a series of seminars under the initiative, examining how a family strategy might be used to positively influence development activities such as income generation and health. The initiative has until now only indirectly addressed the topics of education and children, but recognizes the potential for empowerment of the family through increasing educational opportunities for girls and women or increasing support for early

childhood care and development through family and community participation (USAID, 1990).

Myers (1992) cites several examples of programs in developing countries which fall under the definition of family approaches to literacy, in that they involve more than one member of a family, or use one member of a family to affect others. Such programs typically are aimed at educating parents and other caregivers in the community. Although most of these programs are not aimed directly at raising literacy levels of children (as in the American programs), this type of program has an indirect effect on children, as it fosters ability of parents to meet needs of children for healthy development. Such education can be done through home visits, the media, child-to-child or youth programs, or in adult literacy classes. Many of these approaches include parent education in child rearing, as in the parents and children project in Chile, where weekly meetings are held in communities to discuss child rearing. Discussions are stimulated by radio transmissions, questions asked by coordinators, and pictures. Content of discussions include helping children learn basic cognitive skills such as counting, talking and reading, and health. Evaluation of this program showed that children participating in it scored better on readiness tests and did better in school than others. Changes were also seen in adult attitudes and community organization (Richards, 1985, as cited in Myers, 1992).

Because print media and books are not as pervasive in most Third World communities as in industrialized countries, family-based interventions which focus entirely on literacy may not be appropriate. The process of moving from a non-print to a print-oriented society is a gradual one involving all facets of economic and educational development at all levels. Much more research is needed to determine whether and how books and print use should be encouraged in Third World families. Investigation is also needed to determine ways of working with families to promote healthy child development and readiness for school that are consistent with current family practices.

Nonetheless, educators should not be discouraged from experimenting with shared literacy activities in certain contexts. For example, accomplishment of literacy tasks is often a shared family activity in many developing country cultures (Wagner, in press), and opportunities for shared learning may exist in these cases. In addition, lack of childcare often contributes to poor attendance in literacy classes by women, so attempts to combine

education of parent and child may act to increase participation and retention rates.

In determining the efficiency and effectiveness of family approaches to literacy, it is important to consider how they will affect women. For example, some efforts to improve the situation of women stress the need to disaggregate households and families on the basis of gender, and using the family as the unit of analysis may run counter to such methods. One illustration involves an agriculture program in which organizers attempted to get organized units of farmers to adopt new agricultural technologies. The program was apparently unsuccessful until the focus shifted to family owned micro-businesses, at which point the objectives were more easily attained (USAID, 1990). The potential problem with such a change in strategy is that a failure to take into account the role that women play in the family could ignore factors leading to or supporting their subordination. Considering families as units may also advocate involvement of the entire family in a given literacy program; this involvement may hurt women who benefit from the fact that their husbands do not know they attend classes since they would not be permitted to participate otherwise (Stromquist, 1991).

Some current literacy projects aimed specifically at women fail to take into account dynamics within the family. Income generating projects, for example, may not examine the family dynamics to see how role relations affect the way money is handled within the family, and thus how much access a woman has to the money she may have earned (Yates, 1991). Family approaches which intervene at the level of women but which examine intrafamily dynamics may be more sensitive to factors concerning subordination and resource distribution within the family.

E. LITERACY AND HEALTH

The importance of adequate health care and nutrition for the proper development of children is well documented. Yet, one cannot consider the physical aspects of health and nutrition without taking into account the interrelationship between these variables and the psychosocial aspects of child development. Physical and cognitive stimulation, for example, have been shown in controlled experiments to lead to better physical growth than nutrition and health care alone (Myers, 1992). Third World studies have also found that parents of children who have participated in nutrition supplementation programs played with their children more, and were more likely to enroll such children in school. Researchers surmise that these results were due to the better physical growth and higher activity level of the children, which led parents to not only interact more with them but to perceive them as having more intellectual capacity. The effect was greater with girls than with boys, showing one of the ways in which early childhood programs can help to promote equity.

A second component to consider is the relationship between maternal literacy and child health. In a major review undertaken by the World Bank, it was claimed that "Maternal education is closely related to child health whether measured by nutritional status or infant and child mortality" (Cochrane, 1980, p. 92). While it is hard to determine whether these effects are due to education itself or the accompanying higher income, evidence suggests that although the effect may diminish when income is statistically controlled, education still makes a substantial contribution (Cochrane, 1980).

One study undertaken in Bangladesh concluded that the positive feelings of society towards educated women had as much to do with improving the health and nutrition of a woman's family as any actual knowledge about health that the women themselves might have had (Lindenbaum, 1983). The fact that educated women were seen as doing many things better, such as housework or entertaining guests, the study concluded, apparently led to improved health practices. Unfortunately this study did not eliminate the possibility that the positive attitude held by society towards educated women was not due more to her income or social status than to her educational level per se. Another study by the same investigator concluded that it was not specific knowledge about health that led to improved health behavior, since most

women lacked even the most basic knowledge about health (Lindenbaum, 1990).

Fertility reduction is another often cited social consequence of literacy, and recent investigations have found a negative relationship between the two variables in numerous studies (Cochrane, 1989; Levine, 1987). However, the question of *how* literacy or schooling acts to diminish fertility is a difficult one. One possibility is that schooling or literacy leads a woman to change conceptions about child care to a greater concern with quality of child-rearing rather than quantity of children produced (Levine, 1987). Research has also found that the effects vary depending on whether the woman is married or not, or lives in an urban or rural area (Cochrane, 1982, 1989).

F. CONCLUSION

Although the items of health, early childhood development, women, and families are often arbitrarily separated, it is clear that important connections exist. It is also clear that no single direction solutions to the problem of literacy in the Third World exist. Rather, one must take into account the complex multi-directional relationship in which social and cognitive variables affect each other and literacy, and literacy itself affects each of the social and cognitive variables.

An important policy and development implication of these complex relationships is the need to integrate literacy programs with social life. One facet of this integration is simple sectoral integration, whereby adult literacy programs become health programs and family programs as well, and where nutrition programs become parent education and child development programs, for example. The idea of sectoral integration is not new, but it is still often not done. A major problem with family literacy programs in the U.S., for example, has been that they do not integrate literacy learning needs with other needs of families.

Several examples of programs can serve as illustrations of ways to focus on the interrelatedness of social factors for program development. One example are interventions which have been proposed for use in developing countries and which stem from the proposition that children would do better in school if certain easily identifiable barriers to effective learning were discovered and treated at school. Such barriers include poor eyesight, poor hearing, parasitic infection, and low nutrition. One possibility advocated under this approach is the screening of children for these and other basic health problems upon school entry, followed by treatment. The type of screening done in a given context could depend both on the common problems of the area as well as the ability of the community to both screen and deal with problems (Levinger, 1992).

Another illustration concerns programs which combine income generation and other opportunities for women with quality child development solutions for children. The issue of women, work, and childcare is one which cuts across early childhood development, women, and family literacy. Traditionally, mothers did not separate childcare and work, because their productive activities were done informally, and they had developed strategies which allowed them to integrate both types of work. The rise in the

number of women working outside the home, as well as the increasing number of income-generation programs aimed specifically at women, have made it impossible in many instances for mothers to take their children to work with them. Also, modernization has modified traditional family patterns, so the family network in many developing country situations is not as extended as it used to be, and older children who used to be available are now in school (Myers, 1992). Literacy and education programs for women should make provisions for childcare; and childcare needs to become early childhood education, including pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills development for young children. In this manner women and their children may become part of an intergenerational cycle of educational development.

A last example is the BRAC program in Bangladesh (Lovell & Fatema, 1989), which is combining parent and community involvement to increase literacy levels of children in rural communities, with a focus on girls. One strength of the BRAC program is its use of traditional structures. Although modernization of Third World communities has led to many changes in family and community structure, traditional methods of dealing with topics such as education, health, childcare, and work exist in every society. Programs which build on existing mechanisms are generally more sustainable and more effective than those that do not, partly because existing structures tend to be already integrated with the social life of a community. Integrating literacy programs with social life allows literacy to influence social life, and allows social life to influence literacy. Permitting this interaction to occur may make literacy more effective at bringing about change in the human development dimension—a dimension which often gets forgotten in the field of literacy as people tend to focus narrowly on raising literacy rates. The dynamics of the interaction between early childhood development, health, families and literacy make it clear that while changes in literacy rates per se may not influence social outcomes, changes in human development probably will.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY*

Auerbach, E. R. (1989). Towards a social contextual approach of family literacy. *Harvard Educational Review, 59,* 165-180.

In this article the author presents a critical analysis of existing family literacy programs and research, arguing that they are based on a *deficit model,* which holds that something is lacking in parents which prevents their children from achieving success in school. As an alternative to the deficit model, the author proposes that family literacy be defined to include a wide range of daily family activities. The assumptions evidenced by past studies of family literacy are examined, and support is given for the ideas that language-minority students and their families do value literacy development; that literacy skills can be transferred from parent to child, as well as from child to parent; that home literacy practices do not have to model school practices; that what happens in the home is not necessarily more important than what happens in school; and that parental *problems* with literacy should not be viewed as the cause for lack of family literacy contexts in the home. Auerbach suggests looking at ways to incorporate parents' knowledge and experiences into successful literacy learning instruction.

Ballara, M. (1992). *Women and literacy.* London: Zed Books, Ltd.

This book provides an overview of basic issues surrounding women and literacy, including international efforts to increase literacy levels of women and girls, program planning, multi-sectoral issues, and the production of literacy materials aimed at women. Included are several examples of successful literacy programs throughout the world.

Bown, L. (1990). Preparing the future: Women, literacy, and development. ActionAid Development Report No. 4. Glasgow: ActionAid, University of Glasgow.

Based on case studies of programs involving women and literacy, this report suggests effects of literacy on women's social, economic, and personal lives. Emphasis is placed on separating the effects of education from literacy per se. Issues such as education and development, motivation, programs, and policy implications are discussed. The author concludes that changes in economic development, family health, and emotional well-being can come about through increased literacy levels in women.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology,* 22, 723-742.

This review examines research relating to how external factors influence the ability of parents to encourage healthy development in their children. The research is organized around three major models of external systems

* Some of the information in this bibliography has been adapted from Gadsden, V. L., Scheffer, L. C. P., & Hardman, J. (1992). *Children, parents, and families: An annotated bibliography on literacy development in and out of program settings.* Philadelphia: National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania.

affecting the family: (1) mesosystem, (2) exosystem, and (3) chronosystem. Mesosystem influences include the effects of genetics, environment, and their interaction; they include the interaction of the family with hospitals, day care, peer groups, and schools. The three exosytems affecting the family are the parents' workplace, the parents' social network and community influences. The chronosystem model examines the change and influence of the environment (transitions into day care, within peer groups, and at school and work) and the role of the family (social class, economic, and community factors) over time. A strong emphasis is placed on suggestions for future research.

Cochrane, S. H. (1980). *The effects of education on health*. World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 405. Washington, DC: World Bank.

This investigation of the effects of education on health includes an assessment of socioeconomic determinants of mortality on a cross-national basis, the development of a theoretical model of the relationship between education and mortality, and intracountry evidence on parental education and its association with child health. The author concludes that maternal education is closely related to child mortality and nutritional status, although the exact mechanism through which education acts to improve health is unclear.

Cochran-Smith, M. (1986). Reading to children: A model for understanding texts. In B. Schieffelin & P. Gilmore (Eds.), *The acquisition of literacy: Ethnographic perspectives*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

In this article, the author investigates pre-school children from middle-class, literacy oriented families and their interactions with teachers during book sharing events. Cochran-Smith claims that children are not born with inherent abilities to relate their experiences to *printed* or *pictorial text*; rather, they must develop *sense making strategies* in the process of becoming literate. The author characterizes story reading as a conversational event in which text is interwoven with dialogue between the adult and child that connects the child's experience with events in the text. Story reading is also characterized as a negotiated event in which textual meanings are negotiated and co-created by teachers and children. She argues that through this interaction, children develop the scaffolding for understanding decontextualized texts.

Daisey, P. (1991). Intergenerational literacy programs: Rationale, description, and effectiveness. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 20,* 11-17.

In this article the author defines intergenerational literacy as the tendency to pass on literacy abilities or the lack of them from parent to child. She states that the rationale for intergenerational literacy programs is that if adults become literate then they become empowered to pass on literacy to their children. This conclusion is supported by research from the influence of the home environment, shared reading activities, and parents' attitude toward education. The author reviews three intergenerational programs: Collaborations for Literacy, Parents Readers Program, and the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project. The author states that even though most of the research supporting intergenerational literacy programs is anecdotal, the results have been positive enough to continue to develop the field. She concludes by reviewing the new Even Start legislation.

Ferreiro, E., & Teberosky, A. (1982). *Literacy before schooling*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

This book explores the results of a study exploring the development of literacy skills in children. The researchers devised reading and writing tasks based on the Piagetian tradition to explore how children come to know literacy and how they view the process of developing written language. All of the tasks and questioning techniques were based on the Piagetian premise that children hypothesize about the nature of reality. The population of the study comprised Argentine children of various socioeconomic categories. The first chapter of the book introduces the educational situation in Latin America and the theoretical background for the study. The remaining chapters explore how children progress through various hypotheses about written language.

Giere, U., Amrhein, B., & Behr, I. (1991). *A selective bibliography on women's challenge to literacy and basic education*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education.

This paper provides a selected bibliography of books, reports, and articles on women and literacy. It includes works under the headings of statistics, feminist research, learning materials for women, and reference tools on the topic.

Halpern, R., & Myers, R. (1985). Effects of early childhood intervention on primary school progress and performance in the developing countries. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 279392).

This paper reviews evidence of early childhood intervention programs on primary school progress and performance of poor children from families in developing nations. The paper begins with a discussion of the logic underlying investment in early intervention, based on the situation of children, the nature of the typical primary school experience, and the value of completing a primary school education. Subsequent discussion examines evidence from the U.S. that demonstrates some long term effects of early interventions, and explores the generalizability of the evidence to the developing countries. Finally data are reviewed from early intervention program evaluations in developing countries, especially Latin America, and policy suggestions are outlined toward establishing a sound program of early childhood care and development.

Halpern, R. (1990). Poverty and childhood parenting: Toward a framework for intervention. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 60,* 6-18.

In this article, the author investigates the relationship between poverty and early childhood parenting. The author discusses how different cultural and environmental patterns can determine what are appropriate methods of care and nurturance for children. He also discusses how poverty can have an organizational and pervasive influence on child-rearing, because it affects several areas of parental functioning and the surrounding environment. Stating that current social trends make it difficult for families to get out of poverty, the author investigates how characteristics of parents can reflect either a realistic, purposeful approach to adversity or an approach defined by helplessness and emotional turmoil. Finally the author reviews how different cultures adapt to poverty and concludes with implications for social service intervention.

Heath, S. (1982). Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This book is an ethnography and social history of two communities, Roadville and Trackton, in the southeastern U.S. It investigates the way language learning and interaction in home and community affect children's schooling and work. The author finds that: (1) patterns of language use in any community are in accord with and mutually reinforce other cultural patterns, such as space and time orderings, problem-solving techniques, group loyalties, and preferred patterns of recreation; (2) factors involved in preparing children for school-oriented, mainstream success are deeper than differences in formal structures of language and amount of parent-child interaction; and (3) the patterns of interactions between oral and written uses of language are varied and complex, and the traditional oral-literate dichotomy does not capture the ways other cultural patterns in each community affect the uses of oral and written language.

Heath, S. B. (1982). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. *Language in Society, 11,* 49-76.

In this article Heath differentiates between the ways that mainstream and non-mainstream families make meaning out of print and teach their children about print. Based on ethnographic research in three communities (a mainstream, middle-class, school-oriented culture; a White Appalachian mill community; and an African-American rural mill community), the study discusses the striking differences in the residents' patterns of language use and in the paths of language socialization of their children. The author argues that the dichotomy between oral and literate traditions is a construct of researchers and not a realistic description of language use across cultures. The author also argues that the approaches different cultures use to acquire literacy cannot be described by a unilinear model of development. Based on these two points, the author suggests that researchers use an ethnographic approach and interpret literacy events in terms of the larger sociocultural patterns which they reflect.

Hibpshman, T. L. (1989). *An explanatory model for family literacy programs.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Little Rock, AR.

This paper investigates the assumptions and beliefs that drive most family literacy programs, such as Parent and Child Education (PACE), a family literacy program in Kentucky. Hibpshman suggests that the theoretical basis and the efficacy of the service model used by PACE and others has yet to be proved and that the causes of the outcomes are equally debatable. Hibpshman's three major research questions are: (1) is there a causal relationship between family background and children's educational and social outcomes? (2) will changes in family attitudes and behaviors be effective in changing children's outcomes? and (3) can replication of particular family literacy programs in different environments by different providers result in the same effects? Stating that most family literacy programs assume that family factors are the *cause* and that remedial services can change the outcomes, the author concludes that these assumptions are inadequate as a research basis.

Hiebert, E. (1986). Issues related to home influences on young children's print-related development. In D. B. Yaden Jr. & S. Templeton (Eds.), *Metalinguistic awareness and beginning literacy* (pp. 145-158). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

This chapter discusses three issues of home environment influences on young children's print-related experiences. The first issue focuses on individual child and parent differences in print-related experiences, such as the influence of parents in creating or responding to child differences as well as differences among children in how they initiate or respond to different experiences. The second issue focuses on successful home learning experiences, specifically the degree to which these are simultaneously informal and directed. The third issue focuses on the appropriateness of home intervention programs. In addressing the three issues, the author stresses the influence of home environments on metalinguistic awareness. Directions for future research are suggested.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1991). Decreasing infant mortality as a global demographic change: A challenge to psychology. *International Journal of Psychology 26* (5), 101-116.

In this article decreasing infant mortality is taken up as a demographic phenomenon which constitutes one aspect of *global change*. With sharp increases in the rates of infant and child survival, the question of what happens to those who survive assumes greater importance. The author discusses the increasing importance of psychologists' expertise as new policy shifts focusing on early childhood care and development occur. Especially important is psychological knowledge applied to cross-culturally valid conceptualizations and assessments of human development. The author describes how such knowledge can be used for detection and screening of risk cases and for establishing the environmental factors promoting psychosocial development.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1991). The early enrichment project in Turkey. *Notes, Comments...*, No. 193. Newsletter of Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development. Paris: UNESCO.

This report describes the Turkish Early Enrichment Project, a short-term longitudinal project studying the impact of a combination of educational daycare and home intervention on the overall development of the child. The home intervention involved training of mothers in educational activities for their children, and discussion groups for mothers. The study found that children whose mothers underwent training scored higher on cognitive development outcomes and personality and social development outcomes than children in the study whose mothers did not undergo training. The study also found positive differences in trained mothers' self esteem and orientation to their children.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1992, September). Human development and societal development: Linking theory and application. *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin*, pp. 649-664.

In this article the author discusses the need to apply cultural and cross-cultural psychology towards social development. Using child development and education as an illustration, she demonstrates the relevance of psychological research to human development. The author describes a longitudinal study of early childhood enrichment involving a home-based intervention. Data collected four years and ten years after the intervention

showed that positive cognitive and social outcomes of the intervention had lasting effects.

Laosa, L. (1982). School, occupation, culture and family: The impact of parental schooling on the parent-child relationship. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 74,* 791-827.

The primary focus of this study was the conceptual and empirical examination of the impact of schooling on the parent-child relationship. In the course of a series of studies the author attempted to determine whether parents' schooling, parents' occupational status, and maternal employment each have a distinct pattern of influences on educationally related aspects of the parent-child relationship. Data suggests there is a strong connection between the amount of schooling received and how parents interact with their children. A broad theoretical model causally linking parents' schooling, family interaction processes, and children's scholastic performance is presented.

Levine, R. A. (1987, December). Women's schooling, patterns of fertility, and child survival. *Educational Researcher.*

This article provides an overview of demographic evidence concerning the relationship between women's schooling, fertility, and child mortality, as well as a framework for analyzing how schooling affects maternal behavior and population change. A report from a study in Mexico is discussed, and problems for further educational research are identified.

Malmquist, E. (Ed.). (1992). *Women and literacy development in the Third World*. Linkoping, Sweden: Linkoping University in cooperation with UNESCO and SIDA.

This volume is based on a seminar arranged by Linkoping University, Sweden, held in August, 1991, and entitled "Women and Literacy Development—Constraints and Prospects." The volume includes 12 articles written by female literacy experts from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Each article includes information on the literacy situation in the region, past experiences concerning women and literacy, and recommendations for the future. The articles bring together the stories of many different regions with respect to women and literacy, demonstrating the unique nature of each region and bringing out some important general trends. The authors point out that improving the condition of women's literacy levels must be part of an integrated, cross-sectoral effort, aimed at improving the life conditions of women in general.

McCormick, C. E., & Mason, J. M. (1986). Intervention procedures for increasing preschool children's interest in and knowledge about reading. In W. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Reading and writing* (pp. 90-115). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the developmental stages of reading for preschool children. The authors contend that reading readiness does not necessarily accompany age maturity. Rather, students must be *conceptually ready* for reading. The chapter also presents findings from the authors' study of preschool children's reading and parental support. The authors conclude that: (1) children of lower SES enter school with less knowledge of letters and letter-sounds than children of higher SES and have less parental support for pre-reading skills, (2) easy-to-read books increase substantially children's interest in pre-reading and

knowledge of words and letters, and (3) parents respond positively and actively when easy-to-read books are available.

Myers, R. (1992). *The twelve who survive: Strengthening programmes of early childhood development in the Third World.* London: Routledge.

In this volume, Myers takes a comprehensive look at issues of early childhood development in developing countries. He discusses theoretical issues surrounding the topic, argues for strengthening and expanding early childhood programs, and relates it to such topics as health, schooling, and women's work. Providing several and varied examples of existing programs, Myers considers various program models and issues involved in setting up new programs or ameliorating existing ones, such as resources, community involvement, and cultural practices.

Nickse, R. (1989). The noises of literacy: An overview of intergenerational and family literacy programs. (Report No. CE 053 282) Boston, MA: Boston University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 308 415).

This paper provides a description of intergenerational and family literacy programs, including program design, the basis and motivation for program justification, and research from the fields of adult and emergent literacy, cognitive science, early childhood education, and family systems theory. Attention is specifically paid to cultural differences and political appeals of programs. The paper concludes with recommendations to support intergenerational and family literacy programs.

Parks, P. L., & Smeriglio, V. L. (1986). Relationships among parenting knowledge, quality of stimulation in the home, and infant development. *Family Relations, 35,* 411-416.

This paper describes a study in which relationships among parental knowledge, quality of stimulation in the home environment, and infant developmental performance were investigated in three socioeconomic status groups. More than 120 families with 6-month-old infants participated. It was found that in low socioeconomic status families, parenting knowledge was significantly associated with the quality of stimulation in the home environment, which in turn was related to infant developmental performance. The authors argue that when developing parenting programs, the importance of specific infant care-giving practices for specific developmental outcomes should be emphasized.

Powell, D. (1991). *Strengthening parental contributions to school readiness and early school learning.* West Lafayette, IN: Department of Child Development and Family Studies, Purdue University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 340 467).

This paper is a synthesis of the research pertaining to parent beliefs and behaviors that prepare their children for school success. The first part of the paper discusses the difficulties defining school readiness and the ramifications of different definitions. The second section investigates the parent practices and beliefs that are associated with school readiness and early school success; the author focuses on preschool children and looks at parental beliefs and behaviors that relate to children globally, to their development and ability, to achievement expectations, to parent child verbal exchanges, to affective relationships, and to control and discipline strategies. The third section investigates parents' existing beliefs and practices in relation to preparing their children for school. The author also

discusses the research on strategies for improving and increasing involvement and concludes that just using printed material will not assist low-income families in learning supportive behaviors. Implications for practice and suggestions for future research are presented.

Rosow, L. (1991). How schools perpetuate illiteracy. *Educational Leadership, 49*, 41-44.

The author states that children who grow up in illiterate environments have difficulty at school because they lack experience with print in whole texts. Children from literate environments are familiar with words in context, and therefore have little difficulty with the bottom-up, skills exercises that most schools require. Children from illiterate environments have extreme difficulty with the same tasks and only learn that they cannot successfully complete school tasks. In this way, class distinctions and illiteracy are perpetuated across generations. Schools and teachers need to provide assistance to parents who have few literacy skills, since they are unable to provide the print-rich environment common in most wealthy homes. The authors suggest ways that teachers can foster family literacy.

Schaefer, E. S., & Edgerton, M. (1985). Parent and child correlates of parental modernity. In I. Sigel (Ed.), *Parental belief systems: The psychological consequences for children* (pp. 287-318). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

A major goal of this research was to contribute to a socioecological perspective on child development, building on theoretical premises of Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky. A continuing goal was to conceptualize, measure, and analyze child behavior correlates of parent attitudes, beliefs, values, and self report of their behavior. Analyses of three studies in this project lead to three hypotheses: (1) parental beliefs on child rearing and education are significantly correlated with academic competence; (2) parental beliefs are significantly correlated with parent economic status, and (3) parent socioeconomic status is significantly correlated with child academic competence. Correlations between parental modernity and individual psychological modernity, between parental modernity and intellectual functioning, and between parental modernity and the child's motivation for learning and academic achievement are discussed. The authors state that "parental modernity in beliefs, values, and behaviors contributes to the development of children who effectively participate and contribute to modern society."

Schieffelin, B., & Gilmore, P. (Eds.). (1986). *The acquisition of literacy: Ethnographic perspectives*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

The authors of this volume share a view of literacy as a social and cultural phenomenon, existing between people and connecting individuals to a range of experiences and to different points in time. Literacy is defined as a cultural phenomenon that interacts with certain processes, which is best studied in an ethnographic manner. The essays in this volume focus on the social and cultural contexts and processes involved in the acquisition of literacy. They use an ethnographic approach to study socialization for literacy; this involves an important research focus on the relationship between attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills that are culturally transmitted to learners in relation to the development of literacy skills. Fundamental to understanding these contexts and processes are the social relationships and interactions in which an orientation to literacy is presented to novices.

The book draws on several cultural variations and examples from groups in places such as Western Samoa, Morocco, and the U.S.

Schweinhart, L. J., & Weikert, D. P. (1986). What do we know so far? A review of the Head Start Synthesis Project. *Young Children, 41*(2), 49-54.

This paper offers a critique of the final report of the Head Start evaluation, synthesis, and utilization project. Points raised include the following: studies considered by the report are not based on a representative sample of Head Start sites; findings are based on studies of both low and high quality; and evaluations do not offer the only rationale for Head Start.

Schweinhart, L. J., & Weikert, D. P. (1986). Early childhood development programs: A public investment opportunity. *Educational Leadership, 44*(3), 4-12.

This paper summarizes the benefits of early childhood education programs which the authors claim offer new hope to disadvantaged children and long-range savings to tax payers. The authors review major issues concerning public preschool education, including funding, eligibility, need for high quality programs with a child development emphasis, adequate staffing, and appropriate child and family services.

Schweinhart, L. J., & Weikert, D. P. (1985). Evidence that good early childhood programs work. *Phi Delta Kappan, 66*(8), 545-51.

This paper discusses seven studies of the positive long- and short-term effects of good preschool programs of low-income youngsters. The studies provide evidence that such programs can be effective. The authors also discuss some of the problems faced by researchers in the field.

Scott-Jones, D. (1984). Family influences on cognitive development and school achievement. *Review of Research in Education, 11,* 259-304.

This article reviews the various facets of research that relate to family influences on a child's development and school achievement. Theoretical perspectives, including the nature/nurture issue, parental beliefs and expectations, and bi-directional influences between the parent and child are discussed. Biological factors are investigated in terms of both genetic factors and health and nutrition. In addition, environmental factors are reviewed including status variables (e.g., family configuration, one-parent families, maternal employment, socioeconomic status, and race) and family processes (e.g., maternal interactions and teaching strategies, paternal and sibling interactions, and parental beliefs and expectations). Suggestions for future research and implications for education are given.

Snow, C. E., Barnes, W. S., Chandler, J., Goodman, I., & Hemphill, L. (1991). *Unfulfilled expectations: Home and school influences on literacy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

In this book Snow examines sources of literacy in order to understand better why some children do not acquire literacy in school. A study was designed that emphasized the ways in which both home and school experiences affect the development of literacy in low-income children. The study was conducted in a small city in the northeastern U.S. Thirty-two children in 30 families from low-income neighborhoods and five elementary schools were examined. The data for the study were gathered from interviews, individual test sessions, school records, class observations, and teacher questionnaires. The author suggests that *the family as educator* is an important predictor

of writing skills. The author emphasizes that parents and schools should be partners in order to promote children's successful literacy development. She presents implications for policy and practice in these schools.

Stromquist, N. P. (1992). Women and literacy: Promises and constraints. In D. A. Wagner & L. D. Puchner (Eds.), *World literacy in the year 2000*. Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

This chapter discusses the reasons behind higher illiteracy rates among women than among men in most countries of the world. Research has identified various benefits of literacy for women. Although women could use literacy to increase their access to new knowledge, most literacy programs do not encourage this because their curricula are still designed along sexually stereotyped lines that emphasize women's roles as mothers and household managers. This article argues that these messages do not convey emancipatory knowledge and may solidify values and attitudes that cause women to accept current gender relations rather than to question them.

Taylor, D., & Strickland, D. (1989). Learning from families: Implications for educators and policy. In J. Allen & J. Mason (Eds.), *Risk makers, risk takers, risk breakers: Reducing the risk for young literacy learners, (pp.251-276)*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

In this chapter the authors explore some of the ways in which the changing patterns of social organization of everyday life affect literacy learning opportunities of children at home and at school. A context for the authors' comments is provided through a description of families as educational institutions in which parents and children educate each other. The notion that language and literacy are social processes which cannot be separated from the social development of young children is presented. The impact of stress upon literacy learning opportunities of children and adults both at home and at school is examined. Based on the interpretation of family literacy, the authors provide recommendations for educators and policymakers regarding support for home-school relations, restructuring of the curriculum, and improving the quality of family life.

Teale, W., & Sulzby, E. (Eds.). (1986). *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

This book is a collection of writings by many of the leading researchers in the area of emergent literacy, or the period of literacy acquisition from birth to age six. The theory of emergent literacy is based on the following assumptions: (1) literacy development begins long before formal instruction, (2) children use reading and writing in informal settings, (3) children develop as readers and writers at the same time, and (4) literacy develops in real life settings as children learn through active engagement in their environment. The individual authors address the issues of early literacy development from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. The introduction reviews the history of literacy as it relates to young children. Chapter titles are as follows: "Children coming to know literacy," "Writing and reading: Signs of oral and written language organization in the young child," "Intervention procedures for increasing preschool children's interest in and knowledge about reading," "The contracts of literacy: What children learn from learning to read books," "Creating family story: 'Matthew! We're going to have a ride!'," "Separating *things of imagination*

from life: Learning to read and write," and "Home background and young children's literacy development."

Wagner, D. A., & Spratt, J. E. (1987). Cognitive consequences of contrasting pedagogies: The effects of Quranic preschooling in Morocco. *Child Development, 58*, 1207-1219.

A study was conducted in Morocco to assess the cognitive consequences of Quranic preschooling. Three hundred and fifty 6- and7-year-old children were selected in a way which allowed contrasts in terms of preschool experience (none vs. Quranic vs. modern) environment (urban vs. rural), maternal language (Arabic vs. Berber), and gender. Six different memory tests were employed, as well as other cognitive, reading, and math tests. Results indicated specific and positive effects of Quranic schooling on serial memory but not on other memory or cognitive tasks. These findings replicate earlier reports by Scribner and Cole that Quranic schooling affects specific (and not general) memory skills. The reading measures indicated superior performance among those children with urban background, Arabic maternal language, and, to a lesser extent, Quranic schooling. It was concluded that the corpus of research from this and similar studies supports a *practice theory* of culture and cognition.

Wagner, D., & Spratt, J. (1988). Intergenerational literacy: Effects of parental literacy and attitudes on children's reading achievement in Morocco. *Human Development, 31*, 359-369.

In this study Wagner and Spratt tested 350 6- and 7-year-olds in urban and rural field sites in Morocco and administered sociodemographic and attitudinal surveys to parents as part of a 5-year longitudinal study of literacy acquisition and retention in Moroccan children. Parental literacy and clusters of parental attitudes were found to be related to reading achievement in children. Children's own beliefs about reading and learning were also significant predictors of their own reading performance. Results support the general importance of parental attitudes in influencing literacy achievement across generational boundaries. Findings also reinforce the proposition that children's beliefs, especially in the context of family literacy, can play an important role in reading achievement and school success.

Weikart, D. P. (1989). Quality preschool programs: A long-term social investment. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 312 033).

This report analyzes the long-term benefits, to children and society, of high-quality early childhood education. Specifically, it explores the contribution which these programs can make as a long-term social investment and as a means of ameliorating the effects of poverty. Evidence for the outcomes of such programs comes from a long-term study of the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Disadvantaged children aged 3 and 4 were randomly assigned to an experimental group (that received a high-quality preschool education) or to a control group (that received no preschool training). The study, initiated in 1962, is now in long-term follow-up. The study indicates that good preschool programs can lead to consistent improvement in poor children's achievement throughout their school years and reduced delinquency and dependency on welfare. Factors that contribute to successful preschool programs include the curriculum, parent involvement, and program quality. Many states are developing early childhood programs and allocating funds for them. Several policy issues

must be resolved if services are to be restructured in such a way that all will benefit, including dangers of formal academic standards for young children, distrust of public schools by some agencies that serve children, and shortage of personnel.

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Research shows that parental involvement is crucial to the educational attainment of their children. This paper discusses the difficulty refugee families, or families with parents who do not speak English, have in coping with the American school system and the language barrier. The social context of literacy is discussed as it affects these families, the ability of families to survive and communicate, and the power structure within the family. The author suggests that educational practice should be more inclusive to encourage parental involvement and show proper respect for parents' language and culture.

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